

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

DATE DISTR. 12 October 1949

SUBJECT Uranium Deposits in the
 Freital Area

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SUPPLEMENT TO
 REPORT NO. []

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I.

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1. Coal was produced for 100 years in the "Plauensche Grund", south of DRESDEN (N 52/F 29) near FREITAL (N 52/F 18). The annual output was 211,000 tons in 1935, and about 80,000 tons in 1947. Except for some small remainders the mines are exhausted now.

a. The hard coal of the so-called "Doehlen" Basin is part of the new-red conglomerate. It is of more recent date than the coal of the Erzgebirge Basin around ZWICKAU (N 51/K 34) and LUGAU-OELSCHNITZ (N 51/K 54). It was deposited in three layers, also locally in four layers.

b. The coal of the main layer was usually known as slate coal due to impurities caused by imbedded slate clay. This slate clay consisted alternately of coal slate, bituminous shale and sterile, rusty slate clay. The transition between the second and third layer was of solid slate coal used only for boiler firing as so-called bituminous shale. This bituminous shale, considered unpayable, was usually not mined. The topmost coal layer of the main seam was surmounted by the "green shell" not much thicker than about 1/2 inch and consisting of solid to sterile coal slate. Most of the mines had already shut down.

2. The Russian Wismuth Corporation became interested in these Saxon hard coal deposits in mid-January 1947. The radiometric tests made in the ZWICKAU-OELSCHNITZ District were negative but the "Doehlen" Basin had registered a slight radioactivity.

3. Mining operation was started in this area.

a. First in the ZAUCKERROHE Plant which was still in operation. Prospecting activities were continued on the right bank of the Weisseritz River.

b. The exploratory activities on the left bank of the Weisseritz

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river (at the ZAUCKERRODE Plant) ended recently with unentisfactory results and the "Oppel" shaft was returned to the ZAUCKERRODE Plant.

c. The situation was more promising on the right bank of the Weisseritz River. Six shafts with an average depth of 410 feet, were sunk in rapid sequence during the second half of 1947. The work force increased to about six thousand men. All the shafts were in the old mine fields near COSSCHUETZ, GITTERSLE and BURGK (i. 51/r 18). The uranium occurrences were confined to the uppermost coal layers, especially on the imbedded bituminous shale layers. Experimental burning of produced coal yielded traces of uranium in the ashes and allegedly of thorium also. These first results were shipped to the SU apparently for experiments on radium production from uranium-containing ashes. These tests may not have been satisfactory as no further shipments were sent for a long time. Large stocks of produced bituminous shale were stored at the POTSDAMP-PEL station in a large enclosure surrounded by a high board fence. This production will apparently be abandoned, as the work force remarkably decreased. Six hundred men were sent to Niedernoebell where new opening projects were undertaken in the lead and tin district.

d. Mining in the "Doehlen" Basin was concentrated near COSSCHUETZ, GITTERSLE and BURGK. The surroundings of the so-called ABLETSCHANNEN were the most productive region. The labor force still worked there in its previous strength.

e. Other prospecting activities started in the area of SCHWEINS-DONF at the southwestern tip of the coal depression. Results were not known. Three small seams existed there in the center part of the new-red conglomerate. Some few experimental mining operations were made on these seams without any resultant production. The strongest of these seams occasionally reached a thickness of 32 inches. The quality of the produced coal was very poor. These three seams had no connection with those deposited in the lower new-red conglomerate of the main depression. The center part of the new-red conglomerate of the main depression had been almost entirely excavated and these seams only occurred for very short distances near SCHWEINS-DONF.

f. The former mine fields of the unimportant HARNICKS Hard Coal Mining Association, located in the eastern district, had been exhausted and abandoned since about 1910. Renewed prospecting led to negative results just as in the area west of the Weisseritz River.

g. Only the workable mines of the ZAUCKERRODE and BURGK plants are entered on the sketch. The old mines of the GITTERSLE and COSSCHUETZ Hard Coal Mining Association are not shown. None of these mines had been re-opened by the Soviets. They sank new mine shafts, all of them located in the area of COSSCHUETZ-GITTERSLE-BURGK and in the northern part of FREITAL.

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II

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III

August 1948

5. The activities of the Wismuth Corporation declined considerably in the FREITAL area. Only about 2,500 workmen were employed at the time of observation as against a maximum figure of 6,500. Some mining installations were returned to the German administration and a number of workmen were transferred to the FREITAL District. Some of the material produced in FREITAL was burnt to ashes and shipped, mostly at night. Unburnt coal was also shipped.

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IV

September 1948

6. The uranium mines of the Wismuth Corporation near FREITAL were given the name "Project No 6".
7. Exploratory drillings indicated rich uranium occurrences in the COSSHUTZ area and at the old Oppel Mine near ZAUCKERODE. The exploratory drillings near BURGH were suspended. The Soviets expected the best findings to be on the right bank of the Weisseritz River.

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V

September 1948

8. The mine near ZAUCKERODE located north of the FREITAL-WILSDORFF highway and a mine near PESTERNITZ were returned to the German administration by the Wismuth Corporation as their uranium production was insignificant.

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VI

March 1948

9. Uranium tests were made on rock materials produced in the FREITAL-ZAUCKERODE area. The former "Senig" Xylolith Plant in FREITAL was installed for these tests. Capt KURBANOV was the manager of this enterprise.

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July 1948

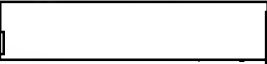
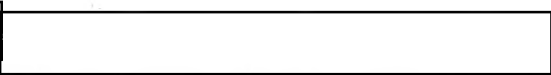
10. The excavation of a gallery started in DOKSBERG-BOELZSCHEM next to the "Braunsmuehle". Work was done in three shifts, each with 60 workmen. The produced uranium ores were packed in boxes and shipped to the PUTSCHAPPEL RR station.
11. Mining operations were also under way in PECHENITZ and on the "Heidenschanze". 25X1C

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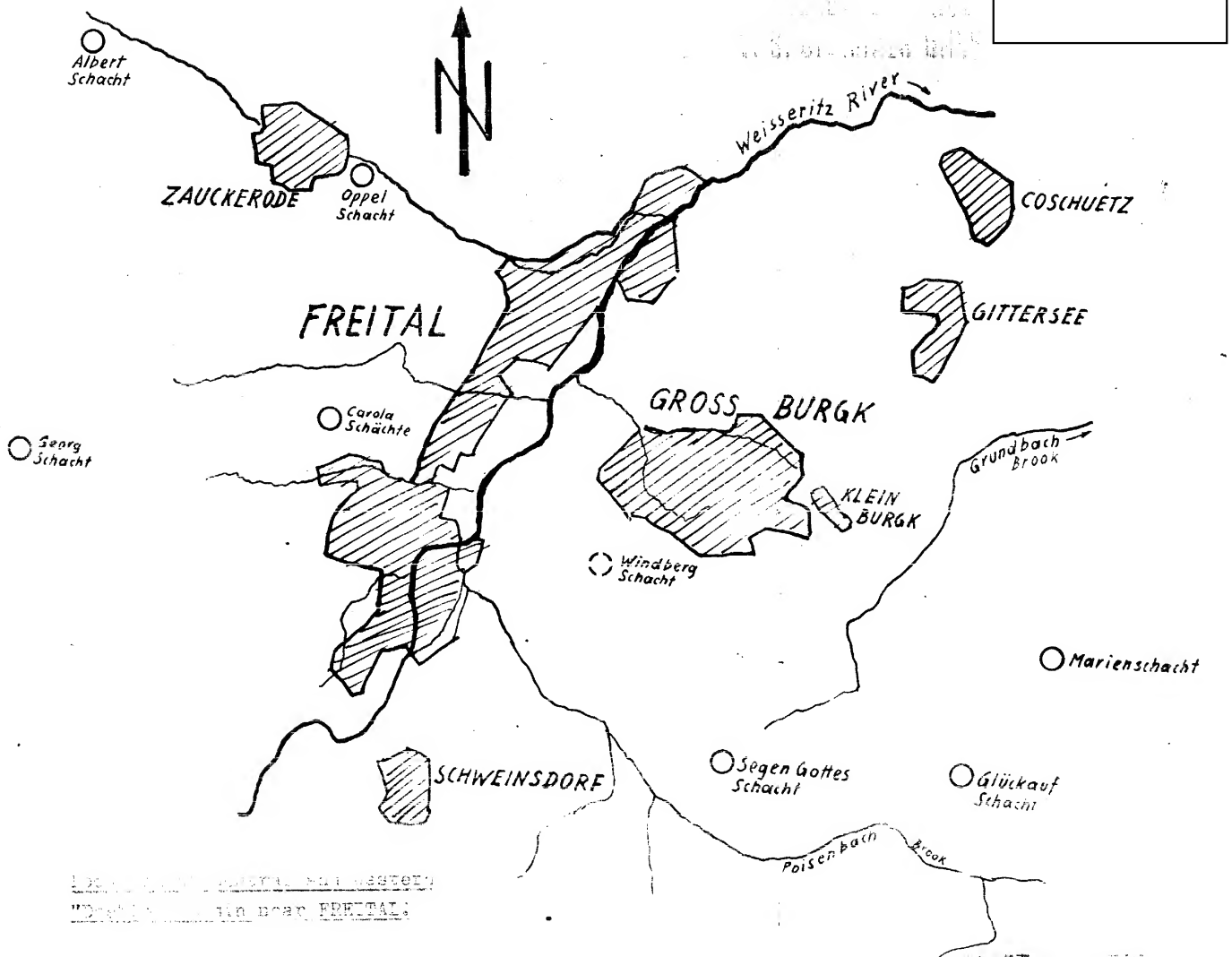


Comment:  

The uranium occurrences in this area were known before 1945, but were considered unprofitable and no production was started. The report indicates that the Soviets systematically trace and exploit even the smallest uranium occurrences without regard to profitability.

1 Annex: Location of Central and Western "Doshlen"-Basin near FREITAL.

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